



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Recreational Harvest of Gray Triggerfish Closing in Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters on May 1, 2014

The recreational harvest of gray triggerfish in Gulf of Mexico federal waters will close, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) May 1, 2014, until 12:01 a.m. (local time) January 1, 2015. NOAA Fisheries has determined the 2014 recreational quota of gray triggerfish has been harvested.

During the closure:

- Recreational harvest or possession of gray triggerfish is prohibited.
- The closure applies in both state and federal waters for vessels that have a valid Gulf of Mexico reef fish charter/headboat permit.

Gulf of Mexico gray triggerfish are managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico. On June 10, 2013, NOAA Fisheries implemented rulemaking intended to end overfishing of gray triggerfish. This rule set the recreational annual catch limit at 241,200 pounds whole weight (lbs) and the annual catch target at 217,100 lbs (which acts as a quota). NOAA Fisheries closed the recreational sector to the harvest of gray triggerfish on October 15, 2013,

after receiving Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) recreational data for January through June 2013, which indicated the quota had been harvested. Subsequently, NOAA Fisheries determined that the annual catch limit had been exceeded. Accountability measures require NOAA Fisheries to reduce the annual catch limit and annual catch target by the amount of the overage in the following year. NOAA Fisheries has determined the adjusted 2014 quota has been met.

This closure is necessary to protect the gray triggerfish resource. This stock is considered overfished (the population size is too low) and undergoing overfishing (too many are being caught each year).

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